

**CONTINUATION OF APPLICATION FOR A SEARCH WARRANT**

1. I, Scott Bauer, am currently employed as a Special Agent with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and have been so employed since March of 2012. I am currently assigned to HSI Grand Rapids, MI. During my employment with HSI I have received training and conducted investigations into a wide variety of federal criminal laws, including cases involving robberies. As a federal agent, I am authorized to investigate violations of laws of the United States and to execute warrants issued under the authority of the United States.

2. Prior to employment with HSI, I was employed as a Special Agent with United States Department of the Interior, Office of the Inspector General, for approximately four years, where I investigated fraud, waste and abuse related to the Department of Interior. Prior to that, I was a Police Officer with the City of Casselberry, Florida, for approximately two years and eight months.

**INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE WARRANT**

3. I make this affidavit in support of an application for a search warrant under Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41 to search the device identified in Attachment A for evidence of violations of 18 U.S.C § 1951 (Hobbs Act Robbery and Conspiracy to Commit Hobbs Act Robbery) as further outlined in Attachment B.

4. The facts in this continuation come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other agents and witnesses. Since this continuation is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing a search warrant, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this

investigation. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause.

### **FACTUAL BACKGROUND OF INVESTIGATION**

5. In February of 2021, HSI S.A. Schifini met with detectives from the Kent County (MI) Sheriff's Office (KCSO) regarding an open investigation into Tayseer Yousef, a Chicago-area resident who was believed to be purchasing stolen cellular phones following cell phone store robberies in the West Michigan area. Yousef is further believed to be selling the stolen devices overseas. HSI Grand Rapids agreed to assist KCSO with their investigation due to an interstate and international nexus. KCSO Det. Cook has indicated that there have been between 30 and 40 robberies or attempted robberies of cellular phones in the West Michigan area in the last year.

6. On June 17, 2021 at approximately 4:39 PM, 4 people robbed a T-Mobile store located at 1976 Mall Place in Benton Harbor, Michigan. The robbers pulled up in a black Audi SUV with no license plate on it, ran into the store, ushered employees and customers into a back room, forced one of the employees to open a safe, stole approximately \$7,000 in cellular phones, and fled in the black Audi SUV.

7. One of the cell phone boxes had a tracking device in it, which the store activated and used to instruct police where the suspects were headed. Over approximately 30 minutes, T-Mobile employees provided updates on the location of the device to police. Police followed the vehicle and learned the suspects changed vehicles from the black Audi SUV to a silver Nissan Rogue. As police followed the path of the tracking device, they observed some of the clothing worn by the robbers had been thrown

from the car. They also saw multiple cellular phones and cell phone boxes along the vehicle's line of travel.

8. The silver Nissan Rogue collided with another vehicle on the Kalamazoo River Bridge on North Bound I-196. Police took four suspects into custody in association with Benton Township Police Department Incident No. 21-005424.

9. Police also impounded the silver Nissan Rogue and obtained a state search warrant for it. When they searched it, police located and seized multiple items including the following: cotton gloves and rubber gloves, cell phones contained in boxes not opened, broken cell phones, and what appeared to be two personal cell phones, as they were contained in aftermarket protective cases. Other items seized during the search included a black and white Easton backpack and a black and white Adidas backpack; these appear to be the same style of backpacks observed on T-Mobile surveillance footage possessed by the suspects during the robbery. Various items of clothing and shoes were also located inside of the vehicle. Also included in the Nissan was a key fob for an Audi. Police removed the Audi key fob from the Nissan and moved to the area where the 2011 Audi Q5 was stored at the evidence parking lot. Police were able to use the key fob found in the Nissan to lock and unlock the 2011 Audi in the BTPD evidence parking lot.

10. After seizing and tabulating the items seized from the Nissan Rogue, police reviewed the video provided by T-Mobile and observed one of the subjects wearing a pair of black sweat pants with neon green writing that matched a pair of sweat pants found in the Nissan. Three different pairs of shoes were also located inside the Nissan, which were observed being worn by the subjects during the commission of the robbery

at T-Mobile.

11. As indicated above, among the items located in the silver Nissan Rogue were two Apple iPhones that appear to be personal cellular phones owned by those involved in the robbery. Those phones were in aftermarket protective cases and are depicted here:



12. Based on my training and experience and information I have received in association with this investigation, I am aware that those involved in robberies often plan

and coordinate their activities using their personal cellular phones. At times, that includes sending messages to others involved in the robbery or the planning of the robbery. That may also include conducting Internet research to identify potential robbery targets, as well as taking photos or videos of the places they intend to rob to better plan, coordinate, and organize their activities. I am also aware that cellular phones may track a user's location and often contain personal information that identify the device's primary user. I am further aware that a forensic examiner can extract the information contained on a cellular device, like the two Apple iPhones recovered in this case.

**AUTHORIZATION REQUEST**

13. Based on the foregoing, I request that the Court issue the proposed search warrant, pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41, that authorizes members of the Department of Homeland Security/Homeland Security Investigations or their authorized representatives, including but not limited to other law enforcement agents and technicians assisting in the above-described investigation, to search the recovered personal cellular phones for evidence of the crimes under investigation.